

# Facilitating an FLC for Your SLC

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# Learning Objectives

Participants in this session will be able to:

- differentiate Faculty Learning Communities (FLCs) from other types of groups/teams
- describe current activities of an Advisors' group
- describe desired outcomes for an Advisors' Group
- describe why an Advisors' Group should transition to become a full-fledged FLC
- describe how an Advisors' Group can transition to become a full-fledged FLC
- describe principles of successful facilitation

# Session Outline

Overview of FLCs - what they are and what they aren't

What are Advisor Groups doing now?

What are desired outcomes for an Advisors' Group?

How to transition an Advisors' Group to a fully functioning FLC

# History of Learning Communities

- Student Learning Communities
  - 1920s, Dewey and Mikeljohn
- Faculty Learning Communities
  - 1979, Cox
- Similar Outcomes (for both students & faculty)
  - Retention, Service, Cognitive Development
- Communities of Practice
  - 1991, Wenger

# What an FLC is – and isn't

<b>Group</b>	<b>Created By</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>SoTL Scholarship of Teaching &amp; Learning</b>
<b>Seminar/Course</b>	department	learning	maybe	no
<b>Committee</b>	organization	process or product	no	no
<b>Task Force</b>	administration	process or product	no	no
<b>Discussion/ Brown Bag</b>	organization or participants	learning	maybe	no
<b>Book Group</b>	organization or participants	learning	maybe	no
<b>Action Learning Set</b>	participants	learning	some	maybe
<b>Faculty Learning Community</b>	<b>participants</b>	<b>community, learning, SoTL</b>	<b>yes</b>	<b>yes</b>

# What Does Your SLC Advisors' Group Do?

Share Experiences & Advice

- Sharing is good
- Sharing is useful

What do the advisors do *beyond* sharing?

In other words, are there specified outcomes for the advisors' group?

What would you like the outcomes to be?

# SLC Advisors' Group Outcomes

SLC Advisors could...

# Decision Points for an FLC Program

1. What FLC Program to Offer
2. Goals and Objectives for this FLC Program
3. Financial Considerations and Budget
4. Membership Application, Selection Process, PR
5. People Involved in the FLC Program
6. Meetings and Activities
7. Developing Community
8. FLC Curriculum
9. Assessment in the Program
10. Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
11. Recognition, Thank You's, and Endings
12. Facilitating



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## Adaptation for SLC FLCs

1. Already decided
2. Opportunity to expand
3. Important to consider
4. Opportunity to reconsider
5. Opportunity to reconsider
6. Opportunity to reconsider
7. Go beyond current?
8. Develop or expand
9. Develop or expand
10. Important expansion
11. How to deal with endings?
12. Who? How?

# Facilitator Ideals

- Flexibility
- Tolerance for ambiguity
- Mindfulness
- Creativity
- Enthusiasm for learning
- Respect for diversity
- Openness to innovation
- Growth mindset

# Facilitator Continua

1. Tight *to* loose structure
2. Fast *to* slow pace
3. Cooperative *to* competitive interaction
4. Focus on process *to* focus on results
5. Concern with individual needs *to* concern with group needs
6. Obtrusive *to* unobtrusive

Sivasailam Thiagarajan (“Thiagi”) (1999)

Opposites attract or reinforce?

# Where are you on each line?

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
Tight Loose

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
Fast Slow

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
Cooperative Competitive

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
Process Results

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
Individual Group

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
Obtrusive Unobtrusive

- Bonding within to form community: off-campus retreats, conference, social gatherings
- Meals together
- Building an *Esprit de Corps*
- Motivating: Success for the team
- Providing safety for risk-taking, accountability, and innovation
- Celebrate, enjoy

# Stage Theory of Small Group Development

Tuckman (1965); Tuckman and Jensen (1977)

- 1. Forming:** Optimism, excitement, objectives, planning, discussion re community, implementation, learning; wait and see attitude; nervousness about inclusion,
- 2. Storming (especially if lack of community):** low energy, going in circles, waning interest and commitment, floundering, challenges, disagreements, vying for leadership or power
- 3. Norming:** Regaining equilibrium, toward productivity
- 4. Performing:** Action, learning, sharing with others, deliverables, achievement
- 5. Adjourning:** Meaningful closure, recognition, celebration

# Big Picture: As a Facilitator Your Stewardship Is to Guide Your FLC to

- Understand the FLC concept—the model
- Select objectives: Ways to accomplish FLC goals
- Cheerlead: Encourage them to climb the bridge
- Build community to provide safety for the climb
- Keep a focus on your FLC outcomes
- Maintain a scholarly approach and develop SoTL
- Ensure commitment

To Accomplish this

- Gradually share the facilitator role with members
- Model the behavior you would like to see them adopt

# *The 16 Recommendations*

## Based on 35 Years of Experience With and Research on FLCs

1. Size
2. Membership
3. Affiliates
4. Multidisciplinary
5. Meetings
6. Social
7. Facilitator
8. Objectives, Topics,  
Budget
9. Commitment through  
Community
10. Assess Impact
11. Evidenced-Based,  
SoTL
12. Present Outcomes
13. Online / Distance
14. Enablers
15. Embed in Center
16. Adapt